

SET ASTOR HOUSE ON FIRE NINE TIMES IN ONE YEAR.

Edward Farley's Astounding Confession Shows that He Has Started Nineteen Blazes in New York and Saratoga Hotels.

Edward Farley, elevator man at the Astor House, to-day confessed that he had fired the hotel nine times, and that he had started ten other fires in this city and Saratoga. Fire Marshal Freely believes one hundred incendiary fires can be traced to him. Here is Farley's astounding confession:

FARLEY'S CONFESSION.

I have been an elevator man at the Astor House for about a year. Previous to that I worked in the Broadway Central Hotel and in the Grand Union at Saratoga.

Since I have been at the Astor House I have started nine fires.

Four of these were serious enough to call out the Department. The others were put out by hotel employees without damage.

I started the first fire Wednesday night. I don't know what made me do it. I had been drinking and was a little jugged when I came to work. I guess that is what caused me to set fire to the place.

The first fire I started in the curtains on the Vesey street side of the hotel. When the blaze got good I gave the alarm and then tried to put the fire out. In doing this I hurt my arm so badly that I have had to put it in a sling.

While everybody was excited over the curtain fire I sneaked to room 330 on the top floor and opened the door with a key I had in my pocket. I had a bundle of papers with me and there was some paper in the room.

I stuffed the papers in the drawers of the bureau, lighted them and shut the drawers. Then I shut the door and skipped, but forgot to lock it.

This fire was discovered by somebody in the street before I had a chance to give the alarm myself. I set another fire the same night in the closets of the Barclay street side of the hotel, but I put it out myself and did not give an alarm.

In the last two or three years I have started quite a lot of fires. I started a fire in the Broadway Central that pretty near got away from the firemen. I also started a blaze in the Grand Union, in Saratoga.

I've tried to burn down almost every house I ever lived in. I guess. When I lived at No. 117 East One Hundred and First street I set fire to the tenement four times.

I set fire to the tenement at No. 113 East Ninety-sixth street when I lived there, and also to No. 1577 Third avenue, when I lived there.

At one time I set fire to Cobalt & Theall's Iron Works, in Bethune street.

I have never set fire to the house I am living in now, at No. 176 East Eighty-eighth street.

I can't say what causes me to start fires. When the impulse comes on me I just go and do it.

I have been burned a number of times putting out fires I started myself. I don't remember when I started all the fires I have set.

FARLEY A PYROMANIAC OF A MOST PECULIAR TYPE.

The circumstances surrounding the two fires in the Astor House Wednesday night pointed to incendiaryism.

Suspicion was directed to Farley, who "discovered" the first fire and injured himself in putting it out. He was also one of the first to reach the blaze in the room on the top floor which broke out just as the firemen were leaving.

Close questioning failed to incriminate Farley until last night. He was taken to the private office of the Astor House and confronted with Fire Marshal Freely, Assistant Fire Marshal McGough, the proprietors of the hotel and the house detective. After four hours' cross-examination Farley broke down and confessed.

Fire Marshal Freely regards him as the most dangerous person of his class in New York. His admissions in covering his tracks was marvelous.

Suspicion was often directed toward him, but he managed to evade proof. Investigation may show his connection with some of the biggest fires New York has known in late years.

Farley is a pyromaniac. He says he cannot tell why he started fires, but the Fire Marshal says his incendiary tendencies grew out of his thirst for the notoriety and commendation.

He always "discovered" his own fires and generally managed to injure himself slightly in putting them out. This gave him the opportunity to pose as a hero, and he never let an opportunity slip.

He was arraigned in Centre Street Court this morning and held for examination on next Tuesday. Then he was taken to Fire Headquarters to be questioned further.

At No. 176 East Eighty-eighth street, Farley, who is unmarried, lived with his father, Patrick, and his brother, Thomas, who is a policeman attached to the East One Hundred and Fourth Street Station. Thomas Farley was arraigned when told of his brother's arrest.

Mayor Low said the matter should be given immediate attention. The Mayor then rose as Gov. Morton started to leave and cordially shook Mr. Morton's hand.

O'NEILL MAY BE POLICEMAN AGAIN.

BILL AUTHORIZING REIN-
STATEMENT PASSED.

(Special to The Evening World.)
ALBANY, March 21.—Ex-Policeman Edward O'Neill who "sensed" former Deputy Commissioner Devery and was summarily dismissed, may be reinstated.

A bill authorizing Commissioner Partridge to reinstate O'Neill was passed today in the Assembly by a vote of 90 to 32.

The Tammany members defended the dismissal of O'Neill and lauded ex-Deputy Commissioner Devery.

POLITICIANS INDICTED.

Ex-Customs Collector and Assistant Accused.

LOUISVILLE, Ky., March 21.—Indictments against former Internal Revenue Collector Charles E. Sapp, Leonard Parsons, Assignment Clerk under Collector Sapp, and Joseph Foran, Grand Juror.

The indictment charges the men with soliciting and receiving assessments and contributions for political purposes.

**MR. MORGAN EVADES
PROCESS-SERVERS.**

While process-servers employed by Peter Power were waiting in Jersey City to serve a summons on J. Pierpont Morgan, the financier quietly evaded them and reached his office in a roundabout way. He was to have been served with notice to appear for examination Monday afternoon at 2 o'clock.

The attorneys for Peter Power say that he will have to appear at that time.

The subpoenas are ordered by Melville W. Fuller, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court.

Peter Power wants him to tell the Court all he knows about the merger of the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific Railway and the formation of the \$400,000,000 Northern Securities Company.

At 2 o'clock the hearing was adjourned until 5 o'clock Monday because Jacob H. Schiff and Charles L. Steele could not be present.

The Line of Beauty.

One may easily identify a woman as a trip line over the Empire State Building.

VERY LATEST NEWS IN BRIEFEST FORM.

Commissioner Partridge announced this evening that he had determined to abolish wardmen. He said: "This idea of captains detailing two of his men to do his dirty work must stop."

WHO HAS SEEN THESE RUNAWAYS?

The police here have been asked to look for Alice Durling and Lizzie Siodum, each fifteen, of Boston. The former wore a dark coat and green hat. She is 5 feet 4 inches in height.

RESULTS AT NEW ORLEANS.

Fourth Race—Loffer 1, Eva Rice 2, Johnny McCartney 3.
Fifth Race—Phyro 1, Marie Belle 2, Moderator 3.

CANTOR CRITICISES COMPTROLLER GROUT.

Borough President Cantor at the meeting of the Board of Estimate this afternoon charged that Comptroller Grout prepares the routine for the Board of Estimate secretly in advance and that the other members do not know what they are voting on half the time. A compromise was reached, and the Comptroller will make public all the most important matters he intends to bring to the attention of the Board within two weeks.

"NO ONE TO BLAME" FOR FOURTH TUNNEL DISASTER.

William Barclay Parsons, the tunnel engineer in charge of the excavation, said: "No one is to blame. The rock which gave way was solid on three sides and the accident is unaccountable. It giving way broke the water pipe, and that loosened the earth and foundations of the buildings. The accident could not be foreseen or forestalled."

SUIT INVOLVES 4,340,339 ACRES OF LAND.

A suit growing out of the absorption of the Houston & Texas Central Railway by Southern Pacific interest, was put on trial to-day before Justice Truax, in the Supreme Court. The plaintiff is Cornelius Macardell, a stockholder of the former road, and involves the title to 4,340,339 acres of land acquired by Charles Dillingham under foreclosure proceedings.

CAMDEN'S MAYOR MAY ADOPT DRASTIC MEASURES.

CAMDEN, N. J., March 21.—Mayor Nowrey, the first Democratic city official elected in this city in many years, as a result of alleged misquoting of him in certain newspapers declared to-day that he would address the public on street corners if it were necessary and have them learn the truth. He purposes to rid the police force of all men who get drunk and those who do not pay their debts.

NONE INTERESTED IN BRIDGE CRASH.

Hearings were scheduled for this afternoon before the Committee on Laws and Legislation of the Board of Aldermen on three important subjects—the Jerome Excise bill, the storage and carrying of explosives and the Bridge crash. As each one in turn was called, no one appeared either for or against the measures. The committee therefore took the matters into executive consideration, and it was announced that they would be reported on at the next meeting of the Board of Aldermen.

WILCOX CASE GOES TO THE JURY.

ELIZABETH CITY, N. C., March 21.—The Wilcox case went to the jury this afternoon. Judge Jones in his charge went over the story of Nell Cropsy's murder and fully discussed the evidence. "If you should let any impression you may have had," he said, "or any public opinion or anything else influence your verdict you do violence to your oaths. I have no opinion in the case. You must act according to the evidence."

WAR TAX REPEAL BILL PASSED.

WASHINGTON, March 21.—The Senate has passed the War Revenue Repeal bill. The bill removes all the special taxes imposed on the outbreak of the Spanish war except that on "bucket shops." It has already passed the House, but as the Senate has made some verbal amendments it will have to be sent back to the House for action.

CONFERENCE ON MAULIFFE CASE.

Police Commissioner Partridge called at the Criminal Courts Building late this afternoon and had a long conference with District Attorney Jerome. Inspector Brooks was also a caller at the office of the District Attorney. Neither would divulge the nature of his business, but the meetings are thought to have had reference to the McAuliffe case.

FROLICKEY CHOIR FOLK RESIGN.

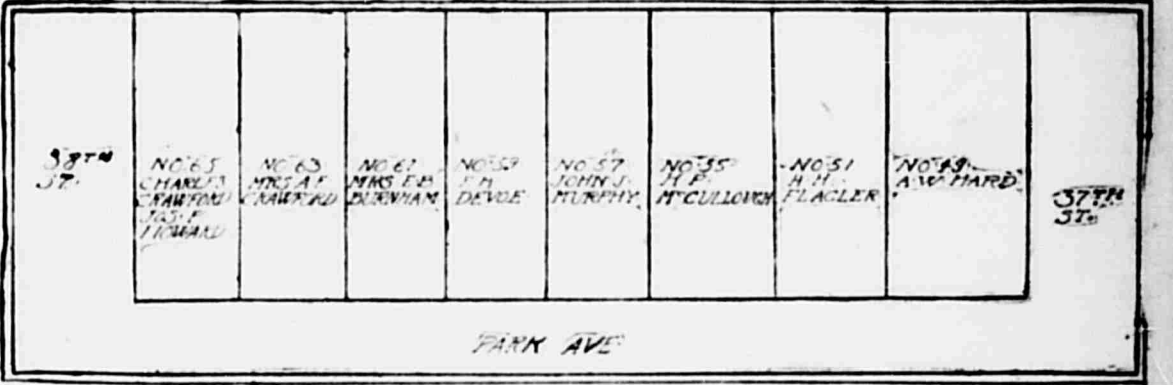
You can't cake-walk and sing in the choir of the Windsor Terrace Methodist Church. Members of the choir did the other night, and the pastor, Rev. Alexander McLean said it was dancing. Leader Lewis Smith and his wife, who plays the church organ, have resigned in consequence.

CARNEGIE GIVES CANADA LIBRARIES.

Andrew Carnegie has given away thirty-eight new libraries, among them several in Canada. The important buildings will be London, Ontario, \$10,000; Denver, Col., \$200,000; Guelph, Ont., \$10,000; Berlin, Ont., \$15,000; Victoria, B. C., \$20,000.

THREE MANSIONS WRECKED BY PARK AVE. CAVE-IN.

Front Yards, Stoops and Basement Walls Drop Into Tunnel—Big Water Main Bursts—Tenants Desert the Block---Damage \$500,000.



PARK AVENUE BLOCK AFFECTED BY CAVE-IN.
(Crosses show houses wrecked.)

Park avenue's fourth great disaster came to-day. Within a few blocks of the scene of the dynamite explosion, the Park Avenue Hotel fire and the Central tunnel wreck, the foundations of three mansions slipped into the tunnel, making them unsafe.

Every house on the east side of the block, between Thirty-seventh and Thirty-eighth street, was deserted by the terrified tenants.

A burst water main added to the danger. The subway was flooded. The damage is at least \$500,000.

CRASHING ROCK AND BURSTING MAIN SPREAD PANIC IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD.

Three magnificent houses on Park avenue, between Thirty-seventh and Thirty-eighth streets, were ruined, the lives of their occupants endangered and the very existence of every building on the east side of that block threatened by another disaster in the rapid transit tunnel to-day.

The front yards of the three houses, Nos. 35, 37 and 39, went plunging into the sixty-foot cut of the tunnel at that point, and part of the front walls followed.

There was tremendous excitement in the vicinity and all the occupants, frightened by the actual danger and made doubly timid by the horrors on that street since the beginning of this year, sought shelter elsewhere.

Damages About \$500,000.

The owners of the damaged houses are Hall Park McCullough, John J. Murphy and F. M. Devoe. The damage to the houses and to the tunnel is estimated at about \$500,000.

The accident did not happen all at once. It began day before yesterday, when a lot of the rock on the east side of the cut and under the front yards of the houses along there began to slip down into the tunnel.

This was caused by what the contractors know as wet seams in the rock. Great masses of the rock slip off from time to time and make the work especially dangerous.

The tremendous blasts which it has been necessary to use in this section have loosened the seams and made the rock all the more likely to slip.

When the first displacement occurred Contractor Ira Shaler got his men at work trying to prevent a recurrence of the accident. They did a lot of shoring-up under the sidewalk at that point, but at 3:30 o'clock this morning there was a recurrence of the difficulty.

Another great mass of rock slipped from its holdings overhead and went pounding down into the bottom of the tunnel. This was the first the residents of the block knew of their danger. So great was the noise caused by the fall that it was heard for blocks and the people in the neighborhood rushed into the streets.

Whole Front Yard Sank.

The house of Hall Park McCullough suffered at this time to the greatest extent. The whole front yard of the lot went down and the front wall of the basement below the level of the street followed. Part of the stoop also fell into the big hole.

On either side of the lot there was a big slump in the land, but it did not fall all the way down. The front walls of No. 37, occupied by John J. Murphy, and of No. 39, occupied by F. M. Devoe, still held on.

Mr. McCullough ran into the street and saw what had happened. He could look right into the basement of his own house, and he thought the whole building would tumble down before he could get the members of his household out. He hustled them out as quickly as he could and put them in the home of Mrs. McCullough's father, across the street.

Meantime the other residents had come rushing out, frightened half out of their wits, and the workmen in the tunnel below came piling to the surface.

Word was sent to Contractor Ira M. Shaler and to Chief Engineer William Barclay Parsons of the Rapid Transit Commission. Mr. Parsons ordered Mr. Murphy out of his house immediately and he took his family to the Murray Hill Hotel.

Mr. McCullough sent for Wrecker Cody and got him to go to work to shore up the rest of his home, so that that might not follow the basement wall. Cody put eight men at work, but they could find nothing in the floor of the basement substantial enough to hold their props.

A Second Landslide.

They were still at work this afternoon when there came another landslide which made matters far worse. This last fall broke a six-inch water main, and there was a tremendous outpouring of water into the already weakened foundations of the houses on that side of the street.

Foundations Go.

It was like hydraulic mining. The dirt and rock flew and fell. The men in McCullough's cellar fled for their lives. The roar of the water and the tumbling debris added to the excitement around the streets. Rumors spread that many lives had been lost and that the foundations of all the buildings on the block had been swept into the pit below.

Word was taken to the Water Department and men were sent to turn off the mighty stream of water. This took time and meanwhile more and more of the foundations of the Murphy and Devoe houses were slipping down into the gulf below which was rapidly becoming a subterranean river.

At 2:30 o'clock the front wall of the Murphy basement went down, and a half hour later that of the Devoe house followed. By this time the Water Department had succeeded in shutting off the big main and the flow of water was stopped, but still from time to time small bits of the loosened rock went tumbling into the tunnel.

Capt. Delaney, of the East Thirty-ninth street station, was summoned to the scene. He took fifty policemen with him and they had a hard time with the crowd who gathered and pressed in on the scene of the wreck.

There was fear, either with or without foundation, that more of the street would go, and the police kept the curious back at a safe distance.

At 4 o'clock it was said that the other houses on the block were probably safe, but the occupants kept out of them. It is hardly probable that any of them will return to-night.

Residents of the Houses.

Here is a list of the occupants of the houses on that block:

NO. 39. MR. AND MRS. A. W. HARD.
NO. 37. MR. AND MRS. H. H. FLAGLER.
NO. 35. MR. WILLETTS.
NO. 33. MR. AND MRS. H. P. McCULLOUGH.
NO. 31. MR. AND MRS. JOHN J. MURPHY.
NO. 29. MR. AND MRS. F. M. DEVOE.
NO. 27. MRS. ELIZABETH R. BURNHAM, LEROY DRESSER.
NO. 25. MRS. ANNIE E. CRAWFORD.

No work can be prosecuted on this part of the tunnel for some time. Not only is it full of debris for a space of 100 feet, where the rock has fallen in, but it is half full of water from Forty-second street to Thirty-third street. This will all have to be pumped out and then the wreckage removed before Shaler can go on with his tunnel building.

Shaler is the contractor who was held responsible by the Coroner's jury for the explosion at Forty-first street which wrecked the Murray Hill Hotel and killed several persons. The residents along Park avenue have complained of late that they feared for their lives owing to the strength of the blasts used.

No Satisfaction from Shaler.

Mr. Murphy said to-day that while he sympathized with Mr. Shaler in the difficulties confronting him in his work he had been obliged to complain to him about the force of the blasts.

He said he got no satisfaction from him, and then went to see District Attorney Jerome. He told the District Attorney that the blasts were getting heavier every day, and that if something were not done to stop it there would be a disaster. Mr. Jerome promised to do all he could in the matter.

The Sleepless Agent.

Electricity wakes the automatic signal and switch apparatus which protects the Pennsylvania Railroad's line on the West. It is a "duty" duty.

TO-NIGHT'S EVENTS.

Eastern Alumni University of Chicago, dinner, Hotel Manhattan.

Harlem Evening High School, exercises, Madison avenue and One Hundred and Nineteenth street.

American Institute of Bank Clerks, No. 226 West Fifty-eighth street.

West Side Y.M.C.A., No. 318 West Fifty-seventh street.

Illustrated lecture, No. 49 West Twentieth street.